



4<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Mr. David W. Alberg  
Superintendent  
Monitor National Marine Sanctuary  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Dear Mr. Alberg,

I seek to formally advise you of our intention to conduct three manned submersible dives on the wreck of the RMS *Titanic* in late summer 2019. As you know, we conducted an expedition to the *Titanic* site in 2018 (with NOAA Observer Tane Casserley onboard) but were unable to conduct any dives due to the presence of Hurricanes Leslie and Michael.

Our plans for 2019 are identical to those of 2018. Our expedition is entirely private (i.e. non-commercial) and has no intention of interfering with the physical shipwreck or its debris-field in any way.

With regard to the international agreement we wish to provide you with the following information:

***(a) the objectives of the project;***

Conduct three private dives via a 2-man submersible to the RMS *Titanic* as part of the global Five Deeps Expedition ([www.fivedeeps.com](http://www.fivedeeps.com)) and to capture imagery as part of a documentary about the year-long expedition.

While at the *Titanic* site we would like to again offer to support the long-term work of Ms. Lori Johnston, a microbial ecologist with extensive experience in deep water shipwrecks and who accompanied us to the *Titanic* site last year. Her research proposal is as follows:

*Re: Scientific Research Activities at the wreck of RMS Titanic, 2019*

*Since the sinking and subsequent discovery of the RMS Titanic, the ship has captivated global attention and continues to do so. In 1996 and 1998, substantial effort was made on behalf of RMSTI to begin examining the wreck of the RMS Titanic from a scientific standpoint, specifically the biological forces that appear to form a significant role in the wreck's deterioration. The research was begun and continues through to the present day by the active participation of Dr. Roy Cullimore and*



researcher Lori Johnston. This research has been ongoing throughout this time (2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2010) with participation in multiple expeditions, including NOAA and RMSTI activity at site.

*The Titanic offers a unique opportunity to examine deep ocean science in a virtually untouched environment. Through dedicated long-term experiments on the continued deterioration of the wreck, a more comprehensive understanding of the degradative processes can occur. The current expedition offers a valuable opportunity to assess the wreck site in its current condition, as well as providing the opportunity to continue to conduct scientific observations and gather valuable data from ongoing experiments currently at site.*

*Historically, all scientific investigations at this site are conducted with extreme diligence and respect as this is not only a grave site, but a valuable part of maritime history. As such all activity has been strictly non-invasive/non-destructive and will continue to be so. As the wreck will continue to deteriorate over time through natural processes, the studies that have been undertaken pose no risk to the wreck itself.*

*There are two main scientific objectives that the 2019 Expedition to the wreck site could assist the researchers with;*

**1) *The retrieval and subsequent replacement of long-term test platforms.***

*The test platforms are completely inert and in and of themselves do not pose any threat to the wreck, they act simply as a platform for biological growth that can be measured over time.*

*The placement of the platforms on the ship is in areas that will be the most productive without having to have physical contact with the wreck*

**2) *The recovery of a small rusticle sample (not exceeding 500grams).*** *The potential sampling of rusticles consists of gathering a small (few hundred grams) of live rusticle from the large, elaborate rusticles found at site. This sampling would not damage the site, the rusticle itself or expose new areas for deterioration to occur. This sampling is important to compare historical types and population of bacteria to present conditions found within the rusticles at site. This also lends itself to the comparison of bacterial populations for recovered experiments.*

***(b) a general description of the methodology and techniques to be employed;***

Our primary expedition platform is the DSSV *Pressure Drop* (formally NOAA's *McArthur II*) which is



the mother ship for our submersible and three free-fall landers. Each dive will consist of the deployment of a human occupied vehicle, which is a fully-classed craft with 6000m+ depth capability. The submersible will be recovered between dives. Two landers will be deployed for the purposes of communication with the submersible and to assist with navigation, and will remain on the bottom for the duration of our three dives.

***(c) a description of the anticipated funding;***

The expedition is entirely privately funded by the owner of the submersible.

***(d) a provisional timetable for completion of the project;***

Our voyage dates are approximately 25 July, 2019 and August 7, 2019 (Bermuda/St John's). We hope to be on site 31 July-4 Aug 2019.

***(e) the composition, qualifications and responsibilities of the anticipated team;***

Our expedition will be lead by myself, and our primary expedition vessel will be commanded by Captain Stuart Buckle (U.K.). The expedition will also include RMS *Titanic* history specialist Mr. Parks Stephenson, who will accompany the pilot.

***(f) the proposal for or results of all preliminary work;***

The expedition only intends to collect imagery with cameras on the landers and an external standard definition camera on the submersible for the primary of purpose of submersible situational awareness and navigation. The submersible is the subject of a wider BBC sponsored documentary, which may or may not utilize the standard definition imagery.

***(g) if applicable, plans for post-fieldwork;***

N/A

***(h) if applicable, a conservation and curation plan;***

N/A

***(i) a documentation program;***



N/A

***(j) a safety policy;***

The DSSV *Pressure Drop* is an ABS classed full SOLAS vessel operated by a commercial crew. The submersible is a DNV-GL classed vehicle and as such has an extensive safety management plan.

***(k) if applicable, arrangements for collaboration with museums and other institutions;***

N/A

***(1) report preparation, contents, and dissemination;***

N/A

***(m) if applicable, the anticipated disposition of archives, including artifacts; and***

N/A

***(n) if applicable, a program for publication.***

N/A

No collection or disturbance of any artifact will be undertaken.

We would be pleased to carry a NOAA Observer onboard.

In assessing the implications of Section VII-19-a, please note our expedition never discharges garbage at sea and will refrain from discharging black water or grey water within 10 NM of the wreck site or 15 NM up current.

Our submersible and landers do use raw steel drop weights, and these will only be deposited outside of the coordinates listed in IMO MEPC.1/Circ.779.

No additional material (plaques, memorials, flowers, etc.) will be deposited.

In due course we will advise the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, and



also the current salvor-in-possession (RMS Titanic Inc.) of our plans.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Again I wish to reiterate that we will not physically interfere with the wreck in any way or attempt to salvage artifacts.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob McCallum", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rob McCallum

Expedition Leader: Five Deeps Expedition.

